



SPORTS HANDBOOK



Town of Harpswell
Recreation Department



2005

RECREATION COMMITTEE AND DIRECTOR

COMMITTEE

Wayne Gagne, Chair
Gary LeClair, Vice Chair
Rick Meisenbach, Secretary
Tony Barrett
Donald Miskill

DIRECTOR

Elizabeth Bouvé

SELECTMAN

Gordon Weil

THANK YOU

If you are reading this you are probably one of the hundreds of volunteers that make the Harpswell Recreation Program possible. The wonderful variety of sports' opportunities would not exist without you. It is time to say thank you for all you have contributed and express appreciation for your on-going commitment to making this program the best it can be for the children of Harpswell. Thank you.

INTRODUCTION

The Harpswell Recreation Department Sports Handbook is the governing document for the Town of Harpswell Sports Recreation Program. Input from the entire community is welcome and encouraged.

All sports directors, coaches and volunteers in the program are expected to read this handbook carefully and abide by the contents, including yearly revisions. Not all items apply to every sport. Disregard items that do not apply to your sport.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT MISSION

To enhance the quality of life for all residents of Harpswell by offering programs and opportunities that appeal to a diverse (age, gender, interest, income) population and encourage community spirit and cohesiveness.

By:

- Stimulating community involvement
- Providing alternatives to loneliness, isolation and self-destructive behaviors
- Encouraging fun and reducing stress
- Encouraging people to get outside themselves, either as participants or providers
- Seeing a direct return on town revenue spent on a highly visible program for the benefit of all

YOUTH SPORTS' GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY

Sports' Philosophy:

We believe in the benefit of sports as a means to teach citizens of this community values and skills that will benefit them throughout life

Goals:

- Create an environment in which children and adults have fun and feel physically and emotionally safe
- Teach skills, rules and strategies
- Empower success and good feelings
- Model and teach good sportsmanship and healthy competitiveness
- Encourage physical fitness

Player Goals:

- Have fun
- Try hard
- Be a good sport

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COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY

One of the greatest challenges to the recreation program is “getting the word out”. Communication and the use of current technology are keys to communicating the activities of the recreation department. Coaches, sports coordinators, and the recreation director are expected to make full use of communication modes available to them.

The recreation department uses the following means of communication:

- Liz Bouvé, recreation director, can be reached at the town office at 207 833-5771 or by e-mail at harpswellrec@gwi.net and P.O. Box 39, Harpswell, ME 04079
- The recreation section of the Town of Harpswell web site is updated regularly and includes: a calendar of activities, registration forms, handbooks etc
The web address is: <http://www.harpswell.maine.gov>
- Flyers are distributed regularly through the schools.
- Flyers are on display for pickup at the town office
- Press releases are sent regularly to The Times Record and The Anchor
- Activities are posted regularly on the scroll of Harpswell Cable T.V.

Note: There is now a drop box at the Town Office on the porch to the right of the main entrance.

COACHING DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Coaches must know that they have tremendous influence, good or bad, on the players. They should never value winning over good sportsmanship and other ideals of good character. The coach is expected to provide an atmosphere in which all athletes are treated in a fair and equitable manner.

The coach should exercise appropriate leadership to ensure that the program has a positive and productive influence on the total recreational experience of the participants. The coach should not indulge in conduct which will incite players or spectators to act out against the other team, officials or spectators.

The coach must be aware of all safety issues and hazards associated with a sport, communicate these concerns to participants, and devote full effort in providing an atmosphere where participants are physically and emotionally safe.

Coaching Responsibilities

- Assume responsibility for following the procedures in this handbook.
- **Make sure all participants have registered and signed a waiver of liability.** No child may participate in any practice or game without pre-registering at the Town Office. Do not accept forms or money.
- Carry registration forms with you to all practices and contests so contact can be made with parent or guardian in the event of an accident or emergency.
- Keep the information on the registration forms private and destroy the forms by shredding or burning them at the end of the season. Contact players on your team within 2 days of receiving the roster of names.
- Communicate dates, times and places to team members and parents.
- Be a role model at all times, even when you are not actively coaching.
- Take responsibility for the pick-up of equipment, uniforms, keys, first aid kit etc, from the designated person (at least one week prior to the start of the season).
- Record a pre-season inventory of all equipment, supplies uniforms etc. Check that everything is returned at the end of the season.
- Take a pre-season inventory of the first aid kit and inform the recreation director if any items are missing. See appendix for list.
- Organize age and activity appropriate practices, scrimmages, and games
- Provide appropriately and positively for the psychological, physical and social needs of all participants.
- Assume responsibility for sportsmanlike conduct and stress the importance of good sportsmanship to the participants.
- Ensure that all participants are treated fairly and equitably.
- Take appropriate and immediate action against disrespectful or inappropriate comments, cheers, gestures, harassment of players or officials, and any action that invites or encourages inappropriate behavior.

- Notify the recreation director, within 24 hours of any inappropriate conduct on the part of a participant, spectator, coach or parent.
- Provide for effective supervision ten minutes before, during and after practices and contests so that no child is left unsupervised.
- Do not allow strangers or children not involved in the program to participate or hang-out at practices. Ask them to leave.
- Where appropriate, maintain appropriate individual and team statistics and records and submit them to the appropriate person in a timely manner.
- Develop an emergency plan for removing players immediately from the area in case of an emergency.
- Periodically inspect equipment, fields, facilities etc. for safety, and report problems to the recreation director in a timely fashion.
- Participate in awards and recognition programs.
- Maintain positive public relations with staff, parents, community members, booster organizations, opposing coaches, and news media.
- Take responsibility for the return of equipment, uniforms, keys etc, to the designated person at the site designated (within 2 weeks of the end of the season).
- Show concern during the school year for the academic success of participants.
- Assist in the preparation and clean up of facilities, before, during and after each use and before and after each season. Participants should have an active and regular role in maintaining spotless facilities. Practice the leave no trace policy
- Make sure all participants and spectators are aware that possession of intoxicants and/or illegal substances is prohibited at recreation events and on recreational property.
- Be advised that prayers are not allowed to be held in connection with town recreational activities. A silent moment of reflection may be observed.
- Conduct activities in groups. For your protection, avoid being alone with a child.

These coaching responsibilities are not all-inclusive. Suggestions for revisions and additions are welcome.

SPORT COORDINATOR'S OR SITE DIRECTOR'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Take responsibility for the day to day administration of the sport.
2. Keep the recreation director fully informed of the status of the program.
3. Consult with the recreation director to quickly resolve conflicts.
4. Ensure that coaches are following the Town of Harpswell, Recreation Department Handbook.
5. Meet pre and post season with the recreation director to:
 - mutually and reciprocally evaluate the program
 - review the season
 - make appropriate changes
 - revise the handbook
 - check on equipment, supply and uniform inventories
 - discuss budget requests
 - discuss routine maintenance and capital improvements
6. Assist in the pre and post season inventory of supplies, uniforms and equipment.
7. Assist in preparation and maintenance of the playing site or field.
8. Organize coaches for pre and post season clean-up of the facility or equipment as needed.
9. Keep the director informed of any equipment or supply needs. Do not purchase items. Requisitions through the town must be done for all monies spent.
10. Ensure age and activity appropriate tryouts, practices, scrimmages, and games

EXPECTATIONS FOR SPECTATOR BEHAVIOR

A mission of the Town of Harpswell Recreation Program is to teach and reinforce values relating to wholesome competition, good sportsmanship and fair play. It is expected that coaches, volunteers, officials and spectators reinforce these values by exhibiting appropriate behavior at events.

A condition of participation in recreation events is that all parties agree to recognize the event as a recreational activity, and that all present have the responsibility to model appropriate behavior.

The event is a unique opportunity for all to be a part of a positive and productive environment and to model behavior appropriate to a recreational activity for children.

- **APPLAUD** players for their efforts
- **ACCEPT** the decisions of officials
- **APPRECIATE** participants and volunteer coaches for their commitment
- **SUPPORT** recreation staff and volunteers in conducting an orderly and spirited contest
- **MAINTAIN** composure when breaks seem to go against your team
- **RESPECT** the rights of other spectators
- **REWARD** sportsmanlike behavior through cheering
- **FOCUS** attention on positive aspects of competition
- **ENCOURAGE** players by showing enthusiasm and positive recognition
- **DEMONSTRATE** concern for the physical and emotional safety and welfare of all

Remember

The participants are children, not professional athletes. They will make errors in the course of competition, as will volunteer officials and coaches; however, all participants are trying their best. Negative criticism and booing will not help them to improve and are unacceptable forms of expression. Focus attention on the positive aspects of performance.

The responsibility to cancel a contest because of improper conduct rests with the sport coordinator and recreation director. In the absence of the sport director or recreation director the coaches have the authority and obligation to cancel or suspend a contest, if in their view it becomes apparent that the contest cannot continue, due to improper conduct or unsafe conditions. Such cancellation shall be considered an emergency measure when an immediate action is necessary to handle a potentially hazardous or volatile situation.

SAFETY

PLAYER SAFETY

The coach must be cognizant of all safety issues and hazards associated with his/her sport, communicate these concerns to participants, and devote full effort in providing an atmosphere where participants are physically and emotionally safe.

FIELD CONDITIONS

Fields should be protected from damage during wet conditions. Coaches should consider canceling activities when the following conditions exist: water is standing on the field, turf and mud can be displaced or dislodged from the ground, the ground cakes or clings to shoes, bare areas are muddy.

CONDITIONING PRECAUTIONS

- Endurance runs, marathon sit-up sessions and similar activities are not appropriate.
- Conditioning should be an integral part of all practices and should be increased gradually
- Adjustments should be made for intense heat
- Warm-ups should be conducted prior to stretching
- Each coach is responsible for reading the registration forms for important medical information and keeping the information private

WATER

- All participants should be advised to bring water to practices and contests. Under no circumstance should water be withheld from participants.

FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT SAFETY

- Each coach is responsible for periodic inspection of equipment, fields, and facilities to ensure they are safe. This includes participation during inclement weather.
- Each coach is responsible for reporting safety hazards to the recreation director within 24 hours.

LIGHTNING AND THUNDER

Procedures for suspending outdoor events because of lightning and/or thunder

- If thunder and/or lightning can be heard or seen, stop the activity and have players and spectators seek protective shelter immediately.
- Inform players that in situations where thunder and/or lightning may or may not be present, but they feel their hair stand on end and skin tingle, immediately assume the following crouched position: drop to their knees, place their hands/arms on their legs, and lower their head. They should not lie flat.
- In the event that either thunder or lightening should occur, allow 30 minutes to pass after the last sound of thunder and/or lightning before resuming play.
 - (1) In case of lightning and/or thunder during an athletic practice, scrimmage, or contest, the activity will be suspended immediately. Players and officials should seek shelter. Spectators will be directed to leave. All coaches are expected to have an alternate plan for seeking shelter and/or expedient departure in case of lightning/thunder or other severe inclement weather.
 - (2) The COACH has the final authority and responsibility to delay or postpone events because of lightning and/or thunder.

FIRST AID

- Each coach is responsible for reading the Medical Information on the registration form and for keeping the information with them and private.
- Each coach is responsible for knowing basic first aid and safety procedures pertinent to their sport or activity. Coaches without this knowledge should seek assistance in obtaining a basic manual to read or review. These are available at the library.
- Coaches are responsible for having a first aid kit, properly stocked and with them at all times. Coaches should not assume the kit is fully stocked and upon receipt should check the contents against the list in the appendix. Supplies must be replaced as used.
- Accidents must be reported within 24 hours to the recreation director.
- Blood spills and blood borne pathogens are a concern. All coaches should know where to find a Bio Hazard Kit at each site to deal with blood spills. Directions contained in the kits must be followed. They are in the first aid kits at Harpswell Island School, West Harpswell School and Trufant-Summerton Ballfield Garge and/or Concession Stand.

COACHING HINTS

- Be the coach you would have wanted to play for.
- Believe in your players.
- Model good sportsmanship. It is a habit, most of which is established in practice.
- Give liberal praise but minimize talking. Kids learn by doing. Comment on a player's actions only when you really have something to say, otherwise they will tune out.
- Don't give false or constant praise. It will be tuned out too.
- Judge the effectiveness of your practice by how many times each kid touched the ball, or performed a skill and had fun.
- Inject and encourage fun, humor and laughter.
- Don't use sarcasm, it does not feel good and undermines your ability to coach. Don't substitute yelling for constructive coaching.
- Understand that team spirit is contagious and success is infectious.
- Practice fairness. Treat kids equally. Every player should receive equal practice time and be expected to share equally in duties such as picking up equipment, trash etc.
- Say no without feeling guilty and yes without resenting it. Avoid hemming and hawing.
- Don't hesitate to say, "I am sorry", "I am wrong" or "I don't know".
- Never single out an individual player and scold or humiliate him or her in front of other people. Embarrassment creates contempt and insecurity.
- Be open to player and parent comments and suggestions. Provide an opportunity and an avenue for them to do this.
- Provide a sense of security by being consistent and predictable.
- Be prepared to teach your players how to learn and how to accept coaching.
- Realize learning usually comes by making mistakes
- Know that the research shows that an increase in volume of the coaches voice results in decreased comprehension on the part of the athlete
- Remember kids may act tough but they are psychologically still kids, even the big ones.
- Remember players do not learn skills or strategies during a game situation.
- Know that a team with spirit and cohesiveness can beat a more skilled team.
- Know that for older players understanding the purpose of a drill is just as important as the ability to execute the skill.
- Understand that if you want your players to talk to each other during a game don't ask them to perform drills and practice in silence.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Understand that this is an opportunity for youngsters to develop social skills, as well as sports' skills.

**CODE OF COMMITMENT TO BE MULTICULTURAL, GENDER-FAIR &
PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED AWARE**

As a coach, I will support the commitment of the Town of Harpswell Recreation Program to enhance race relations, gender fairness, and sensitivity to the physically challenged by:

- Modeling language and behavior that is non-biased and inclusive of individuals regardless of ethnicity, race, religion, gender and physical challenge.
- Educating and sensitizing myself to gender fairness and equity issues.
- Intervening to let others know that I will not tolerate jokes that are sexist, ethnic, nor those involving the physically challenged. Similarly, I will not tolerate racial or religious slurs or any action that demeans any individual or group.
- Educating and sensitizing myself to the cultural heritage and traditions of others.
- Initiating actions that prevent prejudice and discrimination against individuals or groups involved in recreation activities.

APPENDIX

Appendix:

Contents of First Aid Kit

It is the coach's responsibility at the beginning of the season and throughout the season to check the contents of the kit and replace or request replacement of any missing items.

Basic Kit should contain:

Check	Item	Comment
	Band aids	
	Pocket CPR Mask	
	Rubber Gloves	
	Ace Bandage	
	Tape	
	Gauze Pads	
	Instant Cold Compress	May have ice instead

Antibiotic spray may be used. No ointment, unless it is individually packaged.

No aspirin or other over the counter drugs may be administered.

Check medical forms for allergies.